



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman
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<http://edworkforce.house.gov/edwatch>

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Even Teachers Unions Like GOP Local Flexibility Reforms

Parents want to know that education decisions are being made by people who know their children's first names. That's why flexibility and local control are pillars of President Bush's education plan.

The House-passed bill dramatically enhances flexibility for every local school district in America, giving them the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the federal education dollars they receive among an assortment of ESEA programs. Local school districts do not have to receive permission from the state or the Education Secretary to transfer funds. The House bill also allows up to 100 local school districts to receive a virtual waiver from federal rules in exchange for a five-year performance agreement to produce better student results.

State governments also need relief from federal red tape. The Senate-passed bill allows 25 school districts and seven state governments to apply for greater flexibility in exchange for stronger accountability provisions with the Secretary of Education.

Even the teachers unions have been forced to concede that GOP local flexibility initiatives are a good idea. As Sandra Feldman of the American Federation of Teachers writes in a July 30th editorial: *"When local school districts can waive burdensome regulations so successful educational programs can be used more easily, that's good. That kind of flexibility with federal funds has enabled many urban school districts to adopt proven, research-based reading programs, for example."*

Message of the Day

The President's plan gives schools the freedom to target resources where they're needed most -- from class size reduction to teacher pay to technology -- to address needs that may change annually.

- *To meet the higher expectations of the President's plan, local school districts and states should have new freedom from burdensome federal rules and red tape.*
- *Schools and states should receive more flexibility -- not more bureaucracy.*
- *They should have the flexibility to implement innovative education reform plans that have proven successful in improving student achievement.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- The House-passed bill gives states and local schools additional flexibility to improve student performance by reducing red tape and consolidating duplicative programs to help state and local officials meet the unique needs of students.
- According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, the House bill (H.R.1) reduces the overall number of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) programs from 56 to 44. But according to a Congressional Research Service analysis, the Senate bill *increases* the overall number from 56 to 89.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The transferability provision in H.R. 1 *"offers substantial flexibility at the local education agency (LEA) level that will have an enormous effect on the ability for individual districts to respond to what is needed."* -- **American Association of School Administrators letter to committee chairman John Boehner (R-OH)**